Source: <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/overpopulation-problems.html>

In demography, the term overpopulation refers to a condition wherein the total population of a particular region far exceeds the carrying capacity of the region. Although the term by and large refers to the ratio between population and the available area, the ratio between the population and available resources cannot be ignored. Overpopulation is one of the major problems the planet is facing today, and it directly or indirectly fuels other problems, ranging from pollution to [global warming](http://www.buzzle.com/articles/global-warming/). Estimated figures suggest that the world population will cross 9 billion mark by the year 2050. If this happens, it would be very difficult to keep overpopulation problems at bay for a long time.

**Causes of Overpopulation**

Before we move on to overpopulation problems, we need to know about the various factors that are responsible for this incessant rise in population. Significant improvement in quality of life and basic health services has resulted in decline in death rate, and at the same time has caused an increase in the birth rate. Continuous migration of people from underdeveloped areas to developed areas has triggered an unnatural growth in population in developed areas, thus, putting immense pressure on available resources. Our failure in understanding the problems caused by overpopulation in urban areas is reflected in unplanned growth of newer towns and cities. More importantly, a look at the projected population growth is even more horrendous, which in itself stresses on the fact that we are not learning from our mistakes. Read more on [causes of overpopulation](http://www.buzzle.com/articles/causes-of-overpopulation.html).

**Problems Caused by Overpopulation**

Overpopulation problems refer to a series of interwoven problems which are basically caused due to population explosion. The worst thing about these problems is that they act as major hindrances in the process of development. Though restricted to the urban areas as of now, these problems have already begun and it will be just a matter of time before they engulf the entire planet.

**Scarcity of Resources**

Available resources will not be sufficient to meet the demand of rising population. Only 3% of water on the planet is potable, so overpopulation problems will start with the lack of drinking water for millions of people across the globe. Land available for agricultural production is also shrinking, which means the amount of crop produced will decrease with time. If population increases and crop production decreases, a large part of population will be left to die of hunger. In fact, Thomas Malthus had predicted this problem of food shortage due to rise in population two centuries ago through his [theory of population](http://www.buzzle.com/articles/thomas-malthus-theory-of-population.html). Scarcity of resources will not just be restricted to food and water, it will also affect various other walks of life, including health services, jobs and many basic amenities.

**Health Problems**

The amount of waste produced by increasing population will hamper the waste management program in several countries. Untreated waste and poor hygiene will result in the spread of diseases. A large population will make the spread of contagious diseases even more easier. Health resources available with us will not be sufficient enough to cater to the needs of the huge population in case of an epidemic, and the death toll will be difficult to handle. Entire planet will experience large scale outbreaks of diseases, which will wipe out a large part of population by itself.

**Environmental Issues**

Increase in population will also increase the anthropogenic activities which cause global warming and related [climate change](http://www.buzzle.com/articles/climate-change/). Larger the population, more will be the [environmental issues](http://www.buzzle.com/articles/environmental-issues/) that we will have to deal with like pollution and deforestation. We have proved time and again that we won't hesitate to encroach upon the natural surroundings and destroy them if we don't have a place to stay. This will result in loss of habitat for various species and cause a severe ecological imbalance on the planet. It would be foolish to expect that we will be safe from these overpopulation effects, as all lifeforms subsisting on this planet, including humans, are dependent on each other, either directly or indirectly.

These overpopulation problems would not have affected us if we had unlimited land and resources, but that is not the case. Already limited resources are being continuously divided into smaller and smaller portions, especially the land. Perhaps we are yet to understand the hazards of overpopulation, or maybe we will continue to turn a blind eye to them until it causes some serious calamity. The need of the hour is to identify the solutions for these overpopulation issues, and to come up with some measures to curb incessant growth of population. If we don't put in efforts today, tomorrow may not even give us a chance to ponder over the situation.